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## ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY.

PHOTOGRAPHY has reached such perfection of late, that evident confusion has arisen in the minds of many persons respecting the relative difference in value between it and Fine Art; and, in mere rendering of facts of external nature, at least, they think it may supersede Art,\* whence, persons argue, it is useless for artists any longer to employ themselves in recording the plain aspects of nature, but, instead of this, they should endeavour to produce works which should embody certain principles of abstract beauty, "unity of relation," &c., and thus "satisfy the artistic sense."

In view of these opinions, we submit the following remarks.

Photography can never supersede Fine Art; and, no matter what greater perfection of development it may reach, it will still remain just as imperative as ever that the artist should labor faithfully and patiently to record facts of natural aspects; this labor being the only way in which the artist's language can be learned, and his feelings disciplined to recognize the noblest conditions of truth and beauty.

But, irrespective of this, the photograph cannot supersede art, because no photograph can represent *complete* facts.

In photography, objects are represented in much the same way as they are in a Claude mirror. Gradations of shade are never truly rendered by either. In nature, objects are seen under intensely strong light, which admits of an infinitely wide range of gradation before reaching obscurity of shade. In photography, the pitch of light being necessarily as much lower than that of nature as paper is darker than the sun, the range of gradation is,

of course, shortened in proportion, and many subtle and delicate forms are, consequently, merged in obscurity, while others are brought out in unnatural relief.

Now, much of the essential truth and loveliness of nature consists in these subtle and delicate forms and colors. Expression of space and infinity cannot be attained without a representation, in some way, of these. Nothing but the well-trained hand, guided by love and intelligence, can accomplish this. The truthful artist aims to represent the largest sum of most vital truth. His pitch of highest light is no greater than that of the photograph; but he works his gradations with the most careful economy, so as to obtain the greatest possible range, although none of the objects represented in a work of art can have the same relation to *all* the rest that they hold in nature, until we can find a pigment equal in intensity of light to the sun.

The technical superiority of art to photography in representing truths of nature, consists in its power so to *economize* these gradations as to represent more subtle and delicate forms before becoming merged into blackness, and thus to secure a larger aggregate of truth.

Photography is an infinitely valuable mechanism by which to obtain records of limited abstract truth, and, as such, may be of great service to the artist. Much may be learned about drawing by reference to a good photograph, that even a man of quick natural perceptions would be slow to learn without such help. But, unless the real shortcomings of the photograph are understood, it must certainly mislead if followed.

But beyond these merely technical matters, art differs from any mechanical

\* That is, of course, leaving *color* out of the question.

process in being "the expression of man's delight in God's work," and thus it appeals to, and awakens all noble sympathy and right feeling. All labor of love must have something beyond mere mechanism at the bottom of it.

It is necessary for the artist in his studies to do much work that may appear to some persons like merely mechanical copying of nature; but it never is such in the hands of an artist of true feeling.

The technical qualities of a work of art are superior to those of a photograph, in that the former contains more

fullness of consistent truth; but not in consequence of any superior beauty and delicacy over such gradations of forms as *are* given in the photograph; for no human hand can approach photography in this respect.

It is the artist's business, by harmoniously associated representations of truth and loveliness, to quicken love and gratify and inform the mind concerning the Creator's work, and to lead it to contemplate and dwell upon those things which it is good for human souls to heed.

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#### LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

"How wonderful is this rock on which I am lying; a little world of varied beauty and interest, changing with every new inch of surface. Look down closely upon it, so as to shut out the surrounding world, and concentrate the attention upon the minutest details. How impossible to see all or even the greater part of this detail, until after long, patient and loving study. Looking down upon the rock from our five feet seven of height as we stand, the eye distinguishes divisions, layers of more or less marked difference in color; it observes quartz, feldspar, mica, and the mosses and lichens which stain its surface. In a shallow rift filled with earth, bunches of grass, dried with the heat, show a few green blades and waving stems. Farther down, in a larger oasis, about the size of a dinner napkin, I see a larger tuft of grass, from the middle of which rises a little nut tree and a cedar, each about eighteen inches high. Farther down, the quartz appears in larger stains, and in other crevices a few small mullens have sprung up. Below, there is a taller cedar, this time six feet high at least, and near it the stump of what has been another,

which before it was cut down may have gained twelve feet, for below, where, indeed, the soil begins to cover the rock somewhat thickly, there is a fine cedar twenty feet high at the least, with a brave little nut-tree and a wild-cherry keeping it company; but this is at the very outskirts of the rock. I do not step over the border where the soil begins to cover it out of sight; but these things are what the eye can see without minute examination—without lying down upon the rock itself. One thing more, we notice, that the rock is not long left really bare. The soil indeed disappears, but lichens and mosses cover it thickly on the north side, and spot it everywhere.

"But, now, lie down, and look closely, and see how the world changes. A new life develops itself. It is no longer the rock which is prominent; it is the *life* of the rock; that which before was mere incident becomes now the individual. This streak, which seemed from above a nearly uniform grey, on closer looking we find composed of quartz, shaded from white to smoky amethyst inlaid in mica, which, in its turn, is set with minute pin-point crystals of horn